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tionship—mutual trade. Trade may be an initial step in the direction of the symbiosis described by Schebesta (1941, 263) for the archers and their Lese neighbors. Joint participation in the *nkumbi* indicates no more than a willingness on both sides to acknowledge an unavoidable relationship based, as much as anything, on mere territorial propinquity.

What at first appears to be a conformity by the Mbuti to villager custom now appears as a superficial conformity at best and one that barely conceals a detachment of two ways of life. By his participation in the *nkumbi*, and, we may suspect, in other villager institutions, the Mbuti shows his willingness to accept an outwardly subordinate position in villager society. This acceptance is partly responsible for the popular notion that the relationship is one of master-servant or patron-client. His rejection of the inner significance of the ceremonial shows not only a superficiality in the process of acculturation and assimilation but a conscious effort on the part of the Pygmy to keep his two worlds apart—the sacred world of the forest, with one set of values, and the profane world of the villager, invader of the forest, with another set of values. The Epulu Mbuti, at least, have

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as yet assumed village values in name only, and only for the duration of their contact outside the forest where their own values do not apply.

This interpretation of the function of the *nkumbi* initiation ceremony as providing an outward symbol of the association of two neighboring peoples that, for one reason or another, come into contact and cooperate is very similar to the interpretation by Peristiany (1951, 299) of initiation among the Pokot and Karamajong: "The recognition of a common system of age ranks by these two neighbouring peoples permits them to move with ease in each other's society and allows, during peace-time, the extension of social bonds and the obliteration of cultural frontiers."

In the Ituri such a statement could also apply to relationships not only between Mbuti and villagers but between neighboring village tribes themselves, such as the Ndaka, Bira, and Lese.

We indicate above that the *nkumbi* could not be considered as "initiation" by the Mbuti who practice it, as it does not admit them to any exclusive (villager) association or to any exclusive system of values, except possibly on a superficial level. We also suggest that the

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nkumbi offers the Mbuti an opportunity for asserting their individuality at the same time that they are subordinating themselves to the villagers, by asserting an independent system of values. In the *nkumbi*, as in other villager ceremonies practiced by the Mbuti, there is an opposition between the pygmaean forest world and the non-forest world of the villagers. This subject is dealt with in the final section; here a word should be said about the forest values themselves.

In the survey we mention two exclusive associations to which the net-hunting Mbuti are admitted—the *molimo* for the men, and the *elima* for the women. As far as our observations go, there is no reason at all for connecting the Mbuti *molimo* association with the *lusumba* or the *molimo* of the neighboring Bira and Ndaka. They may or may not have similar origins, but in the present situation they seem entirely dissociated. We may well suspect that this is also true of the archers' *toré* society. It is certain, at all events, that the *nkumbi* by itself does not initiate Mbuti boys into membership of the *molimo* (by this term I always refer to the Mbuti institution unless otherwise stated). At the end of the 1954 *nkumbi* the boys all reverted

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533 tion. Once in the village, however, forest values
177 are cast off. Interpersonal relationships become
178 looser; the hunting band as such disintegrates
18 into so many individual families; forest norms
[621] of behavior are cast to the winds; forest song is abandoned. Drum-dance replaces forest music entirely. This is the type of dance and music described by Schebesta (1941, 245). It is never heard in a forest hunting camp among the net hunters, only in the neighborhood of the village. It seems that the Mbuti regard the village primarily as a place for eating, drinking, and making merry, free from the rigors, however pleasurable, of forest life. These rigors demand periods of relaxation. I have suggested that the honey season was once a major holiday season for the Mbuti but that visits to the village are now taking its place.

177 Through their relationship with the villagers,
18 the Mbuti find an opportunity for relaxation,
533 an excursion into the profane world, a period of license which ends, however, in a re-alignment and re-affirmation of the values of their own sacred world of the forest, all quite dramatically seen in the way in which a visit to the vil-

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lage often comes to an end. After a few days or weeks of drinking and dancing, one evening the drum-dance is replaced by song, probably a subdued hunting song sung by a group of dejected-looking Pygmies sitting around a fire in their village camp. They get increasingly melancholy until one evening, probably a day or two after they have stopped drum-dancing, they start singing *molimo* songs. The next morning they are suddenly full of life again, and, despite all protests from the villagers, they pack their few belongings and return to the forest, singing loudly as they go.

The evidence considered suggests that there is a dissociation of two sets of values for the Mbuti—those that apply to the village and those that apply to the forest. The two sets of values, corresponding to two worlds, are accompanied by two modes of behavior. It is a case of culture contact without acculturation; such villager institutions as the Mbuti seem to adopt are adopted and are significant only with reference to their village life. The relationship between the two people is, on the one hand, characterized by various attempts to formalize it through trade, participation in various ceremonies and activities, and, on the other hand, it is characterized by a sharp opposition of two different sets of values. This opposition is an opposition of the forest to the non-forest; the humans, to the animals; the Mbuti, to the villagers.

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tainty, then I cite supporting evidence; otherwise it may be taken that generalization for all net-hunters is considered valid. In point of fact there seem to be few differences of structural interest.

Enough work was done among archer bands to get some idea of the extent and nature of the structural differences to be expected between them and the net-hunters, but again I must emphasize the considered need for further studies, one of which should include a detailed study of an archer band over a similar period and with similar intensity, and another of which should tackle the Mbuti/Villager relationship from the village point of view. Finally, there is need for detailed studies of the various local village tribes, at which point those who are interested may begin to sort out which elements of the present Mbuti culture may be considered as original, and which as borrowed.

The over-all picture is one of a society where the lack of formal structure is so evident that one wonders why there is not complete disintegration. There are not only no chiefs or councils of elders, but no ritual specialists, and no lineage system that in any way contributes directly to order and cohesion. There is no legal system, and no body of belief in supernatural sanctions. The secret begins to reveal itself when you look at the band one day, to see what it really *is*, and look at it the next day and find it is something else.

As suggested above, the constant state of flux that characterizes the Mbuti band may be in response to the attempts of the villager cultivators to assert a formal relationship with it. The lack of chiefs and the lack of priests and the lack of unilineal descent system certainly prevent the formation of political, ritual or domestic ties, and as stated elsewhere (Turnbull, 1956) the economic relationship is one of mutual convenience rather than of dependency. What emerges that seems to be of particular significance is the central theme of the forest, a theme that not only orders the hunting and gathering world of the Mbuti, but also divides them from the world of the villagers as if dividing the sacred from the profane.

If social flux is what prevents the formation of a relationship that would necessarily involve the subordination of the Mbuti to the villagers, the central value of the forest is what maintains internal stability and cohesion, at the same time determining the relationship of opposition with the outside world. This opposition in fact creates a kind of voluntary indigenous system of apartheid, where two peoples live side by side, exploiting the same environment in totally dif-

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ferent ways, with totally different values, with only the minimum of contact, and that based on nothing more than territorial propinquity and mutual convenience. In this way each is able to extract some benefit from the presence of the other without sacrificing its integrity, while maintaining a sense of absolute superiority that, however illusory in terms of economics or politics, is thoroughly justified by the opposition of the value systems.

The fact that this opposition does not erupt into open hostility is due largely to the size of the forest, which can easily support the two populations and the two economies. But the moment some element upsets the precarious balance, rendering one economy or the other ineffective, then collision will be inevitable; and insofar as it is the hunting and gathering way of life that is most likely to be affected, the onus of change will be upon the Mbuti, and they are the ones who, because of the intimate relationship they have with their forest environment, are the least fitted for change. The present study will indicate in some measure the extent to which the Mbuti society is capable of assimilation or adaptation, and the extent to which change can come to it only through subordination or extermination.

Considerable space is devoted to setting out a fairly straightforward ethnography of the Mbuti. This is considered essential because of the present paucity of information that can be used for the kind of analysis here envisaged. The details may seem unnecessarily minute at times, and there are certain total blanks, but the picture is given as fully as possible so that the closeness of the reliance of the Mbuti on their environment may be recognized. And insofar as the environment or territory is going to take precedence over political systems, instability over stability, music over sex and death, and mere age over kinship, it is felt that all the available evidence, however slight it may at first seem, is going to be needed.

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with excessive vigor. It would be an insult as well as *mbafu* (stupidity) to take all the trouble to rejoice the forest by song and then displease it by not having a particularly vigorous hunt. A month of this leaves the stoutest Mbuti more than a little tired, so although the remedy for *akami* lies in their hands, through song, at all times, it can be arduous and, since it is *mota*, it can be dangerous. Thus the supernatural sanction on social behavior is in no way lessened: the Mbuti all state that the forest, in its manifestation through the morning *molimo*, may punish and kill.

The system as described can be seen easily enough to maintain internal order, and it can also be seen well enough how it operates, as an essentially forest-centered system based on age and forest values, to maintain separation from a village system based on kinship and anti-forest values—for one of the cardinal village beliefs is not simply that the village is better than the forest, but that the forest is the source of all evil. But now we have to see how these same elements that make for social order in the forest (the nonlineal band, age, territory, noise and song) operate within the village framework.

Winter (1956) describes the relationship between the eastern extension of the Mbuti, the few who live among the Amba on the Uganda/Congo border, and the Amba themselves. Each group denigrates the other's mode of existence, yet they evidently live in the closest association with each other, in what Winter calls symbiosis. More important, he describes how two Mbuti groups are fitted into the Amba lineage structure, but only partially so. They are both attached to Bulibuli lineages, each to a maximal lineage as a whole; yet they do not share full and equivalent relationships as Bulibuli with the other lineages of the same clan. Winter mentions that they stand in a joking relationship with only one of the maximal lineages.

Joking relationships are generally thought of as pertaining between individuals who stand in a specific relationship to each other, involving both proximity and distance. The proximity is thought of in terms of kinship, the distance is due to a difference, if not a conflict, of interests. The relationship can involve considerable amity and mutual cooperation, but nonetheless contain elements of hostility, particularly in its outer expression (Radcliffe-Brown, 1952, p. 91). The exact formularization varies from situation to situation, tolerating or compelling joking behavior, on a symmetrical or asymmetrical basis.

The essential elements of this form of relationship are all present

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cannot offer absolute sanctuary, for each one of these villagers brings with him *akami* and, even worse, the threat of witchcraft and sorcery. In the last resort, then, the only recourse of the Mbuti will be to learn to master these arts themselves, unless in time they learn to discern between the possibilities of the one as a legal mechanism and the practical ineffectiveness of the other as a physical threat.

In other areas of the forest, where the village tribes are less afraid of the forest, living and hunting in it themselves, as well as cultivating, the attempted exploitation of the Mbuti has been no less and its general pattern and degree of success have been similar, but there has not been the same attempt by villagers to assimilate the Mbuti. This seems to be true not only in the northern part of the Congo, but also further west and in the Gabon.[11] But while in those areas the hunters may not be assimilated into the village system to the extent of being admitted to initiation, they are also, it seems, more ready to accept village beliefs such as those in witchcraft and sorcery, and are evidently more dependent upon the villagers in other respects. However, these areas need considerably more investigation before any useful comparisons can be made. Here it is sufficient to stress that in a situation where the village cultivators are afraid of the forest and unwilling to move freely within it and exploit it, and perhaps correlated with that fact, the Mbuti maintain a form of social organization based on recognizable principles that plainly have a dual function—the maintenance of internal order and the maintenance of separation and distinction from the villagers. In such a situation, the Mbuti adopt only the outer form of the village social organization while in the village, in a form of joking relationship between the two groups. The joking relationship and the dual function of the Mbuti principles of organization effectively counter all attempts of the villagers to effect an institutional subordination of the Mbuti. The value systems of the two people are in complete opposition, and this reflects the whole nature of the relationship between them. The ultimate attempt of the villagers to assert supernatural authority over the Mbuti, while derided by the Mbuti as *bulé*, or empty (but malevolent), might be a cause of Mbuti willingness to undergo the *nkumbi* initiation, as a means of acquiring power through assimilation of like power, to combat this authority.

On the other hand it might be argued that the villagers, in initiat-

[11] Information on the relationship of the pygmies of the Gabon to the village cultivators was supplied by Mr. Leon Siroto, from unpublished field notes.